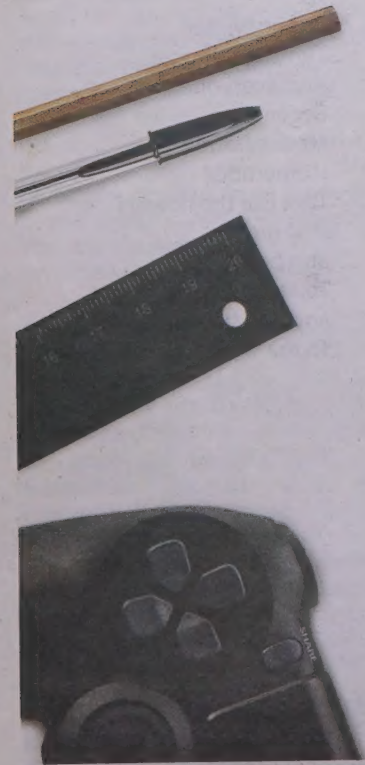




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Beatrice Cardinala

Alberta Street
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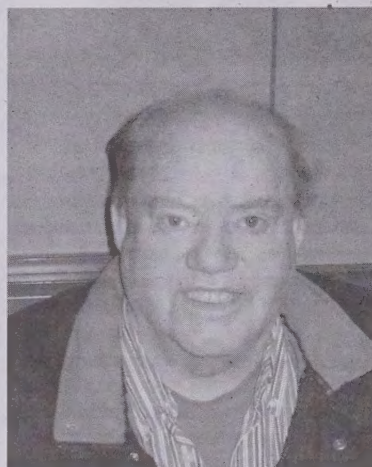
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Poetry



By Ryan Robertson

Spring

The days
Grow longer –
The grass
And
The leaves
Turn green...
On the TV
Hockey playoffs
Can be seen....
It seems
Finally to be spring
And to many
Smiles it will bring –
Nature carries on
And sets its seasons
And has its own
Rhymes and reasons....

The Smile

There you were
Sound asleep
As we drove along...
Slowly but surely
Your blue eyes opened
And you stared directly
At me....
I quietly
Said "Hi"
And suddenly
You smiled –
The recollection
Of who I was
Had taken place –
I was your Grandpa
And you were
My grandson
And the love
Between us
Was unconditional

Reach Up

The time
Has come
To stand up
And
Be counted
We must
Overcome all
That suppresses us –
We must reach
For the top –
It will take work
And we must
Go forward –
But positivity
Will be our guide
And our hearts
Will rule

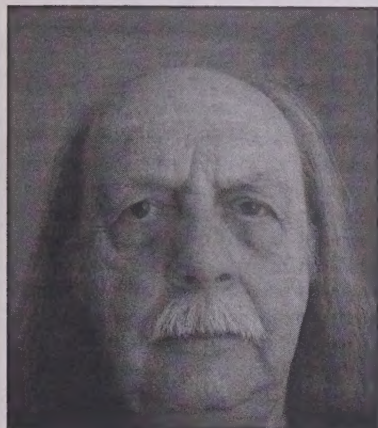
My Corner

From my corner
I meet
With people
From all walks
Of life –
Some talk...
Some buy
But
It makes for
An
Interesting day
And I
Walk away
Feeling well
For people
Are my business
And I'm enriched
By each
And every one...

The Bending

Each day
Is good now
For you are
At my side ...
As
A long winter
Turns to summer
And everyone
Becomes
More carefree
I remember
That like the flowers
that grow
and bend
Towards the sun
and add beauty
To the world

Buddy, Can You Spare a Few Bucks For a Transit Pass?



By Allan Sheppard

As a senior, I have enjoyed a decade of special perks and privileges, involving occasional courtesies and lower prices for everyday goods and services. I have appreciated every one of them, but none so much as the deeply discounted transit passes offered by the Edmonton Transit System (ETS).

When I turned 65 in 2003, the price, as I recall, was around \$125 for an annual pass, and \$12 for a monthly pass. Since then, the price of an annual pass has changed little, if at all, while the price of a monthly pass has risen modestly to \$14. When I could afford the lump sum for an annual pass, I bought one; when I could not, I bought monthly passes. Either option was—and is—a bargain. My discovery this year that I qualify for a low-income subsidized annual pass costing only \$54 was a pleasant and welcome surprise.

I am and always will be grateful for the gift of mobility and independence I have enjoyed through access to affordable transportation, courtesy of the ETS. Others of my age enjoy and cling to those gifts by owning and driving their own cars. But that option is beyond my means and, in any case, wasteful and environmentally suspect. I do not begrudge those who genuinely need, for many valid reasons, private transportation; I simply accept that public transit is more than adequate for most of my needs. The greatest improvement for me would come, not from owning a car, but from more and better public transit, assuming that cost would remain affordable, on my limited and fixed income.

I'll have more to say on personal affordability later, but now I'd like to turn to the news that prompted me to share my thoughts on the benefits of low-cost transit passes. A couple of months ago, the Edmonton Journal and the Edmonton Metro news carried stories about a proposal from the Edmonton Transit System Advisory Board asking city council to approve a three-year pilot program that would make transit passes available to around 100,000 low-income Edmontonians at the subsidized price now available to citizens receiving benefits under the provincial Assured Income

for Severely Handicapped (AISH) program: \$35, instead of the regular \$89 price for adults. A similar program now in effect in Calgary reportedly costs \$5 million or (Dare I make such a cheeky comparison?) less than one-tenth the extra spending recently approved by Edmonton city council to fix, among other nasty things for drivers, the plague of potholes that pit and pock our streets.

According to the Edmonton Journal, the pilot program as proposed would begin in January 2015 and cover "people with low household incomes, children in care, new immigrants and refugees, and others," in addition to AISH recipients.

The proposal is, I suggest humbly, an idea whose time has come: a "no-brainer" as Coun. Andrew Knack put it to a Metro reporter. In a city designed (one might even say over-designed) to cater to and privilege the needs and expectations of cars and drivers and make the use of cars necessary and unavoidable to have to rely on public transit is at best an inconvenience. At worst it imposes obstacles that limit access to goods, services, and health care and to opportunities for work, entertainment, recreation, social interaction, and education.

Economists sometimes talk about opportunity costs: the benefits or possibilities you might have enjoyed or pursued but chose or were forced to give up, in order to do something else. The losses a low-income family incurs and the gains it foregoes, because it has to spend more of its income for transportation than it can reasonably afford, is an obvious example.

Not so obvious, though much more significant for the community and all of us in it, are the opportunity costs absorbed by the city, the province, and us as citizens when they and we have to cover, directly and indirectly, the opportunity

costs incurred by low-income families, because they have to pay too much for transportation.

For some reason, governments and corporate leaders find it easy and attractive to argue on the basis of opportunity costs for construction of an extravagant new arena that will benefit an already wealthy entrepreneur and may (or may not) trickle something down to the city and the rest of us.

It's much harder, it seems, to advocate a modest outlay to support a group of fellow citizens whose need is far greater and who, whether they spend their small gain wisely or not, will spend their money in the community. We should be grateful, then, that the members of the Edmonton Transit System Advisory Board have shown foresight and courage in asking council to do the right thing. And we should be grateful that councillors, notably Amarjeet Sohi and Michael Walters, have supported the concept enthusiastically: now all they and their colleagues have to do is take the necessary action to make it happen.

There seems to be general acceptance among politicians and citizens that seniors such as I deserve the perks and privileges of old age in recognition of the work we have done to build the city, the province, the country, whatever. I find that notion condescending. I have never been and am not now conscious of working or intending to build or enhance anything other than whatever small community I have been part of. Any contribution I have made beyond that was coincidental, not intentional.

More to the point, I am not proud of my city, province, and country as they have turned out to be, with or without my contributions: selfish, self-centred, and self-serving. I do not want to live in a city that spends hundreds of millions on amenities for the enjoyment and enrichment of its elites and its elitists, but tolerates extreme poverty and

homeless. I do not want to live in a city that cannot (or will not) spend one per cent of the cost of its new arena to make it easier for its poor and homeless to get around and enjoy the small necessities and pleasures that may be available to them.

City councillors, even those who think it is a good idea, say they don't know how to finance low-cost transit passes for the poor. I have one suggestion: if people on AISH and other social assistance can afford \$35 a month for a transit pass, then I can and should be able to afford as much on my pension income. And so might others in my position.

It would hurt a bit to have to pay that, but I could manage it, if I had to—just as I have to find the modest amounts I need to pay for Mr. Katz's arena. And Coun. Mike Nickel's road repairs.

It isn't about me. It isn't about you. It's about us. (Or it's about nobody.)

Edmonton Transit System Advisory Board wants city to pilot low-income transit pass:
By Stephanie Dubois, Metro

<http://metronews.ca/news/edmonton/1020456/edmonton-transit-system-advisory-board-wants-city-to-pilot-low-income-transit-pass/>

Edmonton Transit should test low-income pass, advisory group recommends:
By Gordon Kent, Edmonton Journal

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/edmonton/Edmonton+Transit+should+test+income+pass+advisory+group/9796830/story.html>

Carol Cass Honoured With Lifetime Membership at ECOHH General Meeting

By Jim Gurnett

At the ECOHH (Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness) annual general meeting a Lifetime Membership was presented to Carol Cass. For well over a decade Carol has had a major leadership role in ECOHH activities such as the Homefest Concert and the annual memorial for the lives of homeless people, as well as faithfully taking on such activities as being recording secretary to the monthly membership meetings. Carol's name will join those of others who have been honoured



in past years with lifetime memberships. All the names can be found at the ECOHH website at www.ecohh.ca. In the photo ECOHH vice-president Susan Watson (left) presents the award to Carol. The award is represented by a clay tile that is one of those created by inner city community members and homeless people as part of the homeless memorial sculpture project. Many of the tiles are mounted on the sculpture at 101 Street and 103A Avenue. Each tile is an expression by one of the artists of her or his personal experience with homelessness.

People Gather at the Homeless Memorial Sculpture to Remember Those Who Died due to Homelessness



Rev. Travis Enright poured water representing the many tears shed for those who died due to homelessness, then sprinkled on the sculpture.

By Linda Dumont

The Edmonton Coalition for Housing and Homelessness (ECHOH) Memorial for those who died due to homelessness in 2013 was held May 23 at the Homeless Memorial Sculpture. The memorial sculpture depicts a homeless figure in a doorway and around the door jamb are tiles portraying different aspects of homelessness. I was one of the 22 artists who worked on those tiles just over three years ago. My submissions were portraits of five persons who

had experienced homelessness during their life times.

Since then, some of those portraits that I modeled in clay have become memorials to those who have passed away. There is the portrait of my late husband, Glen Dumont, lying on the street with an angel bending over him. Two months after it was completed, he passed away on the street just two blocks from the basement suite we shared. He never came home that evening. I called the hospitals hoping to locate him, but it was a



Alberta Street News editor Linda Dumont places a ribbon at the ECHOH Memorial for the homeless on May 23 at the Homeless Memorial sculpture at 101 Street and 103A Avenue. This year the 35 men and 15 women, who passed away due to homelessness in 2013, were remembered.

police officer at the door the next morning, who brought me the news that Glen had died.

Another portrait is of Chris Robillard and his late companion, Diane Wood. My memories of them go back over the past ten years, from when they were living in an old Volvo and doing quite well, through a number of attempts at housing they maintained for a few weeks or months at a time. There was a period of time when they were camped out in the garage behind my house, and other time

when they lived in the yard of the house next door. They even moved in for a period of time, resulting in an eviction notice. At the time of Diane's death in November 2012, she had been away from the street, clean and sober for a while, but was drawn back to her homeless companions, and contracted pneumonia.

I have lost touch with the other persons I portrayed in the relief tile portraits. But every one of the men and women who passed away in 2013 is mourned by someone.

Resources In Edmonton

SOMETHING TO EAT...

- HOURS VARY - CALL 211 FOR MORE INFORMATION**
- Bissell Centre - daily sandwiches 780-423-2285 ext.140
 - Robert Tegner Friendship Room (adults only) 10527 96 Street
 - Boyle St. Community Services - daily lunch 780-424-4106 10116 105 Avenue
 - Edmonton's Food Bank - food hampers (must call) 780-425-4190
 - Hope Mission 780-422-2018 9908 106 Avenue
 - Marian Centre - daily lunch 780-424-3544 10528 98 Street
 - McCauley Seniors Drop In (55+) 780-408-2970 9526 106 Avenue
 - Mustard Seed - evening meals 780-426-5600 10635 96 Street
 - Salvation Army - food hampers 780-424-9222 9620 101A Avenue (drop in)
 - 1241 Hyndman Road (by appointment) 780-472-6743

SOMEWHERE TO SLEEP...

- FOR WOMEN**
- Women's Emergency Accommodation 780-423-5302 9611 101A Avenue
- FOR MEN**
- Herb Jamieson Centre 780-429-3470 10015 105A Avenue
 - Salvation Army Short-Term Residence 780-429-4274 9611 102 Avenue
- FOR WOMEN & MEN**
- George Spady Centre (intoxicated) 780-424-8335 10015 105A Avenue
 - Hope Mission 780-422-2018 9908 106 Avenue
 - YMCA Downtown Housing (small fee) 780-421-9622 10030 102A Avenue
- FOR YOUTH**
- Hope Mission Youth Shelter 780-422-2018 9908 106 Avenue
 - Youth Empowerment and Support Services - Shelter 780-468-7070 9310 82 Avenue

SOMEONE TO TALK TO...

- 24-HOUR CRISIS LINES**
- Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-387-5437
 - Crisis Support Centre Distress Line 780-482-4357
 - Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868
 - Seniors' Abuse Helpline 780-454-8888
 - Sexual Assault Crisis Line 780-423-4121
- IMMIGRATION SERVICES**
- Catholic Social Services 780-424-3545 10709 105 Street
 - Changing Together - A Centre for Immigrant Women 780-421-0175 3rd Floor, 10010 105 Street
 - Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers 780-424-7709 11713 82 Street
- COUNSELLING SERVICES (NO-FEE/SLIDING SCALE)**
- City of Edmonton 780-496-4777
 - Assessment and Short-term Counselling
 - The Family Centre 780-424-5580
 - Urban Counselling Network 780-424-4106 ext.272



Photo by Donald Austin

Summer Holidays and a trip to the Edmonton Exhibition

By Sharon Austin

All of June I waited impatiently for school to be over and the summer holidays to begin. Walking the two miles to school, my sister Linda and I would see such beauty all around us. The road allowance bloomed with the gold of dandelions, the delicate beauty of bluebells and lots of strawberry flowers. I would stare longingly out the window as the teacher droned on and on in the hot stuffy classroom

pink tongue covered with ants. You must remember that this was at a time before television shows like The Nature of Things brought pictures of exotic animals right into our homes. We had never seen television and the information that we could look up came from books and encyclopedias. This was a time when things like computers and cell phones were only written about in science fiction books so the strange new things at the exhibition were amazing. My favourite ride was always the carousel with the bright painted horses that went round and round to the pretty music. Linda liked the ghost house where our car would bump and jerk through the darkness until a ghost would suddenly light up and bar the way. With a quick turn we would escape and breathlessly wait for the next scary apparition to appear.

One exhibit that would probably not be allowed today was The Giant Ape. The giant ape was a huge gorilla that growled menacingly and rattled the bars on his cage as the crowd stared at him in awe. The keeper told us all about the giant ape and fed him a banana which he grabbed with his long sharp claws. The crowd was told that the ape was going to do some tricks and a black curtain fell down in front of the cage. Moments later there was a loud crash and horrible growling from behind the curtain. A man's voice screamed "The ape has escaped, run for your lives." Everyone began to run in terror for the exit as the curtain thrashed wildly and the keeper kept yelling "Get Back! Get Back!" Linda and I were really fast runners and we were half a block away before we realized that it had been a hoax. No wonder there had been a warning sign at the entrance "Not for anyone with heart problems."

At the livestock exhibit we saw huge Clydesdale horses and lots of new baby chicks dusted with a powder so they looked like fluff. There were lots of games that we could play like ring toss and shooting yellow plastic ducks but we never bothered with those. We were too busy enjoying the tamer rides and eating cotton candy.

When the day was over Linda and I decided to ride home in the box of the pickup truck, which had high sides on it for hauling livestock. There was enough sweet smelling clover hay in the box to make a soft bed and we lay there in the gathering dusk talking over all the wonderful things that we had seen as the little truck rattled and bumped over the gravel road. By the time we neared home it was pitch dark and all the stars were out gleaming like diamonds in the sky. We scanned the heavens for the Big Dipper and made wishes on the falling stars that streaked soundlessly towards the earth. It had been a magical day at the exhibition followed by a ride home that I have never forgotten.

It took so little to entertain us and make us happy in those days and the things that we enjoyed and experienced were a part of real life. How different from the modern generation of children, who spend so much of their time in fantasy worlds of computer games and television.

oblivious to the glorious beauty of June.

At last it was over! Linda and I would throw our old worn shoes away and run barefoot through the fields and meadows of our farm. In those days we only had one pair of shoes, which had to last us all year. After all those days of being cooped up in school Linda and I would get up early, eat some homemade bread and peanut butter and run for the woods. I can honestly say that we were never bored as there was always so much to do. We did lots of farm chores, picked berries, and weeded the huge garden that Mom planted in the spring. To make money for the exhibition, Mom paid us ten cents a row to weed the garden. Those were very long rows with lots of thistles in them so we earned our money and we hoed between all the rows, too.

The Edmonton exhibition was very exciting to two young farm girls, who rarely went to the city. I haven't gone to the exhibition for many years but I am told that it has changed a great deal. In those days, one of the attractions that Mom and Dad always took us to see was the Freak Show. Huge billboards around the vast tent showed colourful depictions of the Snake Man, the Bearded Lady, The Rubber Man, The Smallest Man in the World and many others. There were also dramatic drawings of the sword swallower, the fire eater and a turbaned contortionist from some foreign land. Once inside the people didn't look much like the drawings but it was still very interesting.

One exhibit that I will never forget was the man with an armadillo. Linda and I stared in awe at the furry little ant eater with his long sticky

Pavement Stories

Pavement Stories is a research project conducted by John Whitaker with a grant from Homeward Trust. For the project ten people over the age of 40, who have experienced at least five years of homelessness, were interviewed. Stories from the interviews are being published in Alberta Street News. In this issue we have Steven's story from an interview with him last summer. Next issue Sam tells his story.

Steven

I hate to say it but I'm 44. I got my Grade 12 diploma from Red Deer College and I think I got that in '88. I took auto body and I took their apprenticeship course and I got my journeyman's certificate in auto body. I did some framing and renovation work, drywalling, mudding, painting, you know, full range of renovating. I've lived in Edmonton basically for my whole life. I was born in the Royal Alex and I think I grew up on the south side, just out side of town, so in the Edmonton area kind of thing basically my whole life. I think because I'm a raging alcoholic, that's what caused me to lose some jobs and kind of lose interest in pursuing them. I think the addiction kind of got the better of me in a lot of those instances.

In the mornings I usually get up at eight o'clock, go over to the Boyle Street Co-op for a coffee and then I go over to the Hope Mission for breakfast. If I'm not injured I usually give my buddy a call, the person who I'm doing some renovating work for and he usually comes to pick me up at around 11 o'clock and then I go to work at his place helping him doing his renovations. He brings me home and if I get paid I usually go get a six-pack, a pack of smokes, grab my weed, sit at my place and have some beers and smoke a joint and that kind of is - I guess that's really my day, I kinda like try to get some work, make some money, buy some beer, some weed, cigarettes and that's my day.

When I'm not working I usually go, I spend I guess a lot of time at the Boyle Street Co-op. I usually go over there for coffee; they have coffee at ten, they have lunch there at 11:30 and then I go over to the Hope Mission, there's a few other agencies around downtown that offer lunches and stuff so I'm never hungry which is good, it's kind of nice - Edmonton's downtown street help, they have a lot of food agencies kind of so that's a good thing.

Continued on page 10



STARLESS: A REVIEW



By Eric Rice

By Jim Gurnett

Most of the time people of the street are at best invisible to "successful" people moving along the sidewalks. At times, they are actively avoided or abused. It is unusual for someone to pay them the respect of seeing them as human beings, deserving of attention and understanding. And it is even more unusual for that interest to express itself in a way that treats them without judgement or condescension or stereotyping.

Edmontonians who took in Eric Rice's play "Starless" at Walterdale Theatre in May had the rich experience of getting to know some of those who are living the vulnerable dangerous lives of street people as full complex human beings, each a unique person. Rice, who is chair of the board of Alberta Street News and a regular writer of vendor profiles for the paper, has been listening to vendors talk about their lives over the past few years, and his insights and perceptions of the reality of street life have been nurtured by getting to know many of these people.

The play focuses on the a day in the life of Ralph, from the time he wakes in the park where he has

slept and finds his friend Mary is gone from his side. During the day he interacts with a young boy, a well-meaning journalist wanting to expose the dark side of the city, a priest, cop, and landlord. These others express the variety of judgemental and simplistic views of many who are outside the direct experience of poverty, mental illness, and oppression that has exercised influence on Ralph. What holds the play together movingly is Rice's refusal to ever reduce Ralph to a "character" who is predictable or nothing but the expression of the social challenges that have assaulted him. He remains a complex person who surprises us over and over through the play, sometimes tough and abrasive, sometimes tender, sometimes vulnerable, sometimes angry, sometimes brilliantly perceptive and cuttngly eloquent, but in the end heroic in his faithfulness to live with honesty.

Sitting through the play, with the good acting, staging, and direction, was an engaging cultural experience. Walking out of the theatre to see a homeless person with a grocery cart of bulging bags of beverage cans retrieved from dumpsters offered an immediate challenge to have no quick conclusions about what was going on with him..



By Eric Rice



PETER GOLDRING
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East

O CANADA "IN ALL THY SONS COMMAND"

Changing our national anthem to render the line "in all thy sons command" seemingly more gender neutral is grammatically unnecessary. "O Canada" is already gender neutral. We can check the dictionary or recall our historical precedents to see there is no need to make changes out of some sense of political correctness.

The word "son" has more than one definition; it does not necessarily refer to a male offspring. This is particularly true when referencing nationhood.

Take Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, tenth edition. A son is defined as: "a **person** closely associated with or deriving from a formative agent (as a nation, school, or race)." Or the Concise Oxford, ninth edition, which includes in its definition: "a **person** regarded as inheriting an occupation, quality etc. or associated with a particular attribute (sons of freedom, sons of the soil)." Hence, sons in this context can be seen as **persons**.

The 1929 "**Person's Case**" contested and won by the "Famous Five," which included well-known Albertan Emily Murphy, concluded that women are indeed persons.

Therefore, if sons are **persons** in the national context, then the word "sons" in our national anthem "O Canada" is gender neutral and indeed means both male and female persons.

The version of "O Canada" on which the official English lyrics are based was written in 1908 by Justice Robert Stanley Weir. Today's English version includes changes recommended in 1968 by a Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons, which reviewed the anthem word for word for its appropriateness.

"O Canada" was proclaimed Canada's national anthem on July 1, 1980, one hundred years after it was first sung on June 24, 1880.

I see no reason to change the anthem's lyrics. The current anthem wording is politically correct and is gender neutral.

What do you think?

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By Eric Rice

25th Anniversary Johnson's MS Bike Tour brings out 1,750 riders to raise money for MS



By John Zapantis

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada Alberta/Northwest Territories Division hosted and organized its 25th Anniversary Johnson's MS Bike Tour on the grounds of Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers in Leduc County's Nisku industrial community. The purpose of the fundraising event was to raise public awareness about Multiple Sclerosis MS and its detrimental impact on Alberta's MS community through pledges raised by riders, who were at the event, which had its fundraising cyclists riding 175 kilometers – a two day journey from Ritchie Bros. parking lot located between Nick industrial area and Leduc to Camrose.

Prior to the start of the MS Bike Tour, a stage presentation of keynote speakers consisting of Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada volunteers, prominent local politicians and an MS survivor gave their greetings and personal insights on MS.

Global Television personalities Mike Sobel and Daintre Christensen acted as MC's, introducing various speakers to the stage, where they delivered their greetings or insights on Multiple Sclerosis. Speakers included Leduc Mayor Greg Kriskche, Leduc/Beaumont MLA George Rogers, Edmonton/ Leduc MP James Rajotte, Home and Auto Vice President Marlene Dickson, MS Bike Tour Manager Abbey Elzen and MS survivor Anne Belohorec.

Anne Belohorec came onto the stage as the last speaker. She proudly spoke up, commending the many cyclists, who came out each year to help to raise pledges to make a difference in the lives of those living with MS. Belohorec said, "It seems that twenty five years ago, we met on a weekend in June to support Multiple Sclerosis. I've been a part of it and it's been my privilege for 20 of those 25 years. We've come together in rain, cold and wind. For the first few years I sort of wondered as I first came out, who will come? Who will come in this weather? What I learned is this - at this time you will all come out and in record numbers every year. You've raised money to help the people with Multiple Sclerosis live a better quality of life and to ultimately cure this disease. I still have my mitts for the rest of this weather, but I think we're going to have a good day today, which is wonderful. One in 500 Albertans has Multiple Sclerosis and the money we're raising helps provide for equipment and educational needs. It helps their families. It helps their friends and ultimately we'll be ending MS with the



These three ladies came out to show their support for the cause during the 25th Anniversary Johnson's MS Bike Tour. Left to right are MS survivor and participant Patrycia Rzechowka, MS Walk Co-ordinator Nicole Gasior and MS Event Co-ordinator Tiffany Schlichter

money you raised."

Prior to the MS presentations, MS survivor and MS Bike Tour participant Patrycia Rzechowka, 25, took time out for an interview with ASN. She is a dog trainer and Polish immersion teacher. Patrycia's a 3rd year participant of the MS Bike Tour. Just before the starting of the bike tour she raised \$2,000 in pledges. Rzechowka lives with relapsing/ remitting MS. In spite of living with MS, there is no history of MS in her family. She was first diagnosed with MS at age 23. Prior to her diagnosis, she was working on her criminology degree, while aspiring to become a police officer. Her problems started one day when she suddenly started to experience occasional blurriness in her left eye. The blurriness re-occurred to haunt her a few years later, this time causing her left eye to go completely blind. She then became very concerned about her condition, so she went to see a doctor who ran a battery of tests. One of them was an MRI that determined her condition was relapsing/remitting MS.

The doctor who diagnosed her for her temporary blurriness, confirmed her one eye had optic neuritis. The blurriness in her eye occasionally came back, but only lasted for a period of 5 months until her doctor placed her on aminio suppressant steroids that cured her temporary blurriness.

She realizes how fortunate she has been not to have experienced other aspects of MS that most MS survivors commonly experience. Since recovering from her minor battle with MS, she has been encouraged to keep a watchful eye on her health just to play things safe.

Rzechowka said, "I've changed a lot in terms of diet. I exercise a lot. I have amazing support from my family and friends. So that's another thing."

Since defeating her enemy, MS, her mission has been a lifetime commitment to helping to make a difference in the MS community. She participates in many MS fundraising events that give her a purpose to work towards.

Rzechowka said, "I mean, there are so many different MS events. There are MS walks, MS golf fundraisers. You can pretty much find anything you're interested in. If you don't want to

participate, you can always volunteer, cause that is just as important as the fundraiser and awareness that it creates, is probably tops of all that."

She'll tell you herself, the two day MS Bike Tour, riding 175 kilometers of hi-way, is no piece of cake. Rzechowka said, "It makes me feel pretty good, I guess. It's tough. I'm not going to lie. Like, it's not an easy ride. So when I ask for donations, it's not for nothing. I swear it is like a good three or four hours on a bike for two days."

After the ending of the stage presentations Leduc Mayor Greg Kriskche, 61, gave a moment of his time for an interview with ASN. He has been an avid supporter of the Johnson's MS Bike Tour since its early humble beginnings back in June 1995. He is a prostate cancer survivor. When asked

why he was out to show his support for the MS Bike Tour, his reply was to honor the many riders, volunteers and donors, who make this event possible every year. Kriskche said, "I think this shows that people care. It starts out with those who volunteer and spend up to a year putting together a big event like this. It's the riders who go out and raise dollars. It's the donors who are willing to give dollars to the eradication of something like this."

Right after the stage presentations ended, 1,750 riders left the starter's line for their two day 175 kilometer journey from Leduc County to the City of Camrose, Alberta and back to Leduc County. The riders all eventually arrived at Camrose and then set camp for the night, before heading out to Leduc County the next day.

This year the MS Society of Canada's anticipated goal for raising pledges for the MS Bike Tour was \$2,000,000. Those who donated to the cause along with 500 volunteers and over 1,750 riders all made the event a big success. Thanks as well to the various local business sponsors who threw in their support to help to make this all possible. Money raised for the MS Bike Tour will go to support MS programs, services and research and hopefully towards finding a cure for MS someday.

Correction: The story featured in the June 2014 Alberta Street News issue entitled MS Walk in the City of St. Albert raises \$55,000 was mistakenly published with the byline Timothy Wild. The story was written by John Zapantis. Alberta Street News apologizes for any inconvenience caused to the writer by this error.



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We're Number...17 and 20!

By Timothy Wild, Calgary

Inequality seems to be getting a lot of attention these days. It is about time. As I wrote last month in relation to wealth and income, we are living in increasingly unequal times, with Alberta having the unenviable distinction of being the most unequal province in Canada. And this socially constructed and sanctioned problem has negative and long-term implications for not only individuals and families but also society as a whole. Obviously, though, wealth and income aren't the only two dimensions of inequality that warrant our consideration and attention.

Indeed, a report written by Kate McInturff with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives adds to the considerable (and growing) body of literature regarding inequality in general, by analyzing aspects of gender inequality across twenty Canadian cities, from St John's to Victoria. Both Calgary and Edmonton are studied in this document, and for some the rankings will be a bit of a surprise.

In terms of the methodology "each city is ranked based on a comparison of how men and women are faring in five different areas: economic security, leadership, health, personal security

and education." The report then goes on to explain that the process and analysis does not capture the differences in rural areas, "nor does it address differences between populations of women", certainly an important fact to keep in mind given the intersection of variables such as race and class coupled with gender. That being said, it does provide an interesting portrait of comparative inequality within and between Canadian cities.

Quebec City headed the list as the most gender equal city. We in Alberta, on the other hand, did not fare as well. Calgary landed in 17th place, while Edmonton was at the bottom of the list in 20th place. Let's not forget that these placements are based on average scores in the various dimensions. And there were some bright spots for women in both Alberta cities in terms of health and in completion rates for post-secondary education. However, these were not enough to balance the higher dimensions of gender inequality in the other areas considered. For example, reasons for Calgary's position include the large pay gap between men and women, low political representation in municipal government and the limited presence of women in senior management positions. Factors for Edmonton's placement included the different participation

rates in full time employment (i.e. more women working part-time), the largest gap in the country in terms of employment incomes and, once again, low political representation at the municipal level of government. Over all, the report was a sad reminder of the fact that we've still got a long way to go baby!

Yes, inequality is getting a lot of attention these days. And rightly so. But what we really need is action at both the community and policy levels. Now, there are some who suggest that inequality is too abstract a notion to fight, and we would be better positioned to fight poverty. Michel Kelly-Gagnon, with the Montreal Economic Institute, quite rightly points to the fact that working towards equality does not necessarily mean reducing poverty. There are more equal societies that are (economically) poorer. Fair comment, even if obscured by the shadow of an ideological mask. However, I do not believe that it has to be an either / or proposition. We can fight both inequality and poverty; and I think this is particularly necessary when looking at the feminization of poverty, one of the most obvious consequences of the overall inequality faced by women.

As noted by McInturff "closing the gap is a matter of working on many fronts at once"; certainly easier said than done. However, there are groups that are attempting to work on these "many fronts". For example, the Women's Centre

in Calgary, has written a wide ranging policy document entitled "A gendered analysis for Alberta's Provincial Poverty Reduction Plan". Much of the information contained in the brief is neither surprising nor new; indeed the Women's Centre has been calling for a gendered poverty reduction plan for ages. But it is a comprehensive, well thought out policy-based contribution to the anti-poverty discussion. Elements of this analysis include the need for women's leadership in anti-poverty initiatives, the implementation of at least a living wage, investment in childcare and early learning, and the provision of an adequate stock of affordable housing. Once again, there are answers to the social problem. We do have ways to reduce inequality and support the creation of a more just and inclusive Alberta. But it all comes down, once again, to political choices.

In the introduction to their plan, the Women's Centre notes "societies that value and promote the inclusion of all members, particularly the most vulnerable, enjoy greater social, educational and financial stability. Increased social inclusion produces stable societies with robust democracies and occurs when all citizens have equal opportunity to participate and contribute to the social, economic, political and cultural systems of a society." That doesn't sound bad does it? I think that is a place we'd all like to live in...so let's choose it!

Healing For Ourselves And Our Country

By Angelique Branston

My family has suffered from the residential schools. My grandmother was forced to go to them, so she never learned how to be a real person. My dad was taken away when he was a child and raised in foster homes; he too never learned to be a real person. (I looked into becoming a foster parent once but when I spoke with someone who used to be one, she told me to not consider it. The children can be taken away at any time, and you would never see them again, so the people that actually care don't do it to begin with because the heart break is too much and the rest of them do it because it is a way to make money). My father terrorized my mom, my older brother, and my younger sister. We all bare wounds and scars to this day because of him. We are lucky that our mother has strong family ties, and has taught us her values. We have something to hold onto when the terrors from the past try to engulf us. Each day I get a little stronger. I have PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) and memories that are so repressed I might never recover them and my sister has a brain injury. Yet I know we are lucky because we have each other to lean on, as well as our mother.

I have struggled with the idea of forgiveness for years. I have

been told that in order to heal I must forgive, but even God does not forgive unless we first ask for forgiveness. I do not dwell on it. I recognize that my ex father was so wounded from his past that he never was capable of becoming a caring human being. Canada has asked for forgiveness for the wrongs that were perpetrated (so ghastly and horrible it is equal in value to any genocide that has happened in the history of the planet) and is in the process of trying to make retributions for the wrongs. I am glad that it is being done. I think forgiveness must be given. As a nation we can grow stronger from this to become an even more caring and understanding country just like Germany has grown and become more socialist after WW2. They, too, have apologized for their past, and tried to make retributions.

The change of a nation is within the heart beat of each and every citizen. If each person took it upon himself or herself to stand up to injustice, to not look the other way when racism happens, that would make this country one step closer to the type of nation it should be: where the weak are protected by the strong, not pecked off like the sickly chickens pecked off by the strong ones.

Homeward Bound Support Services Fundraiser

Date: July 5, 2014

Time: 12pm to 4pm

Location: Sun Toyota Whyte Avenue 10130 82 Avenue

Event Details: BBQ and Fundraiser - Balloons, DJ, Food and Fun

Homeward Bound Support Services is a non profit foundation set up to support the 350+ clients of Martyshuk Housing.

Poverty in the City: It's Not the Agencies - It's All of Us

By Paula E. Kirman

I spent the day on Whyte Avenue on a Saturday. I was accosted by a panhandler almost as soon as I got out of my cab. Throughout the day I witnessed homeless and transient people pushing full shopping carts, sitting on the sidewalk, staggering around drunk, and swearing loudly. I saw the evidence of their lives scattered throughout the area: litter, broken bottles, stains on the concrete from all kinds of bodily fluids (granted - some of this may be the result of bar hoppers needing to rid themselves of their last few drinks). Yet this is still considered a desirable area of Edmonton to live, work, and hang out.

The next day, I took a walk through Chinatown, and saw pretty much the same things. However, in this case, many have come to expect problems in this area of the city with homelessness, addictions,

and mental illness. Many of the city's agencies that serve this population are nearby. Some people blame the concentration of agencies for the problems. Some consider the inner city a much less desirable area to live, work, or hang out because of all of the social issues there. It is just an accepted fact that in that part of the city, excrement occurs (often literally).

However, as I observed that weekend, these problems are everywhere throughout the city. And where there is an agency, there is perceived blame. The Neighbours Centre is near Old Strathcona and according to a friend of mine who used to work there, the actual neighbours of the centre are none too pleased. Not far from where I grew up, in the Jasper Gates area, the Jasper Place Health and Wellness Centre and its associated social housing)

has garnered many of the same complaints I have heard levied against places like the Boyle McCauley Health Centre. Heck, the first place I ever saw a man urinate outside was in the parking lot of the Jasper Gates shopping centre.

The question is: what can be done about poverty and its resulting social disorder? There is no easy answer to such a complicated question. Yet it is so easy to point out the problems and complain about them - I myself am guilty of such behaviour - but not as simple to try to think of solutions. I am an activist with political leanings that are left of centre. This world view has shaped my perspective on social issues in general, and specific ones such as poverty and housing.

In my mind, the first question that needs to be asked is why there is poverty and homelessness in such an affluent city in the first place? All poverty, everywhere in the city - it is not okay to just accept the unacceptable in a lower income, rougher area. The answer, my friend, is systemic and will require systemic changes. Basically, we have a political and

economic system (the two are inextricably interconnected) that is based on greed. The rich are getting richer and the middle class is being eroded.

So, the answer is not throwing more money at the problem. It's not further concentrating essential services and agencies in parts of the city that are already saturated. And it certainly is not gentrification. We - all of us - need to change the way we look at issues such as material wealth, consumerism, and the way we make a living. We need to question who we vote for and why, and try to effect change on a grassroots level.

As an activist, I get very angry at seeing the inequalities in our society. But anger will only take someone so far and no more. Anger needs to lead to action. Otherwise, it just leads to ulcers and depression. Maybe I am being overly idealistic here, but if idealism can be a motivating force (along with anger!), then maybe that is the first step towards what we need to do.

Advertising Opportunity

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Deadline for advertisements and submissions for the next issue is July 15, 2014

Meals & Food Resources in Calgary

Drop-In Centre 1, 4th Avenue SE

All clients of The DI may access meal services. Meals and snacks are provided at no charge to anyone in need. Food service is offered on the 2nd Floor daily, 365 days a year. Clients who are unable to attend regular meal service due to work or school commitments, or other verifiable appointments can receive a bagged lunch. Bagged lunches can be arranged by request to any staff person, or through the Day Office located on the 2nd Floor.

Meal Schedules

- Breakfast - 7:00 a.m.
- Snack - 9:30 a.m.
- Lunch - 12:00 p.m.
- Snack - 3:30 p.m.
- Dinner - 6:00 p.m.

Center of Hope 420_9th Avenue SE

Free for clients
Open to public for small charge
Breakfast: \$2.50
Lunch: \$3.00
Dinner: \$4.50

Emergency Meals (24 & Under)

EXIT Community Outreach
117-7th Avenue SW, Calgary
403-262-9953
Sunday 1 :00 pm -5:00p.m.

Emergency Meals - Youth EXIT Youth Shelter

11216 Ave NE, Calgary
7 days/week - 4:00 pm - 9:00 p.m.

Community Supports

Streetlight - Youth for Christ

Parks at 10th ave & 1 st Street SE
Monday & Thursday

Emergency Meals

Alex Community Health Centre
Unit 101, 1318 Centre Street NE
403-266-2622

Thursdays Only - 10:30 a.m.

Food Bank

Calgary Inter-Faith Food Bank
403-253-2055

Food Hamper

NeighbourLink Calgary
403-209-1930

Food Bank

Calgary Inter-Faith Food Bank
403-253-2059

Food Bank

Calgary Poppy Fund and Veterans
Food Bank
Monday - Friday 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Food Bank

Muslim Families Network Society: Halal Food
403-466-6367
www.MuslimFamiliesNetwork.com

Food Hamper

St. Edmund's Anglican Church
8336-34th Ave NW
Monday & Thursday
09:00 am - 12:00 Noon

Community Meals

Inn from the Cold
403-263-8384

Emergency Food

CUPS (Calgary Urban Project Society)
128-7th Avenue SE

Food Hamper & Meals

Feed the Hungry, St. Mary's Cathedral
Sunday Dinner
3:30 pm - 5:00 p.m.

Meals on the street outside City Hall

Calgary Street Church
Monday - 6:00pm,
Wednesday 11:00a.m.
Friday - 6:00pm Sunday, 1:00 p.m.

Pavement Stories: Steven

Continued from page 5

I used to be staying at the Salvation Army and then I moved from there into MacDonald Lofts, so I never did actually get stuck out on the streets. There's another facility called the Bissell Centre. I used to go there in the mornings they have like a job bank or something there that you get in line and you pick a number and if they call you up, you might get a job for the day, kind of thing. I use all the feeding stations including the Mustard Seed and Hope Mission. I could use a date line -that's about the only thing I'm missing is a girlfriend.

Basically the best people that can help me are my parents and when they're in town I always call them up every week to see how they're doing and say hello and sometimes I go over there to have dinner or something, go over there for a visit, so I always like when they're in town just to communicate with them. They really help me.

I feel good when I see the Police around our area. There's a lot of people smoking crack, all the crackheads around there in that area. Some days I don't feel very safe walking out the front door because there's all these crackheads around. I just like to avoid people like that. To me it's just bad news. I don't want to get involved in their world so it's kind of good to see the cops around I think.

I think the programs are doing a really good job as it is now with programs. They're offering housing, they'll help you if you are looking for a place to live. They'll

like steer you in the right direction. If you're doing drugs, using needles, they have street workers there that will supply you with needles, stuff like that. The Co-op itself, it provides coffee, lunches, they have counsellors there you can talk to if you want to talk to them. I think they really do offer a lot of services that relate to the street if you're living on the street or something like that.

I don't use needles so I don't really need needles. I'm already living in a place so I'm not looking for housing, yet but I do like how they offer the coffee and meals and stuff.

There are a few agencies around downtown that do have clothing rooms where you can go on certain days that they're open. You can go in there and look around to see - they have socks, underwear, pants, shirts, all that kind of thing.

I've made some bad choices for sure. Because I'm an addict, I like to drink. Sometimes that's overridden everything else it seems. I just want to have a beer and I just don't think beyond that, oh yeah, I need another six pack or something like that. I drink too much, I sleep in or late for work, I get fired because of that, a number of choices like that I've made. Drugs are bad. I know that addictions are hard to overcome. I know there's a lot of changes I should, need to make. I've made bad choices in the past and I'm trying to not make those kinds of choices any more. I'd rather stay alive than wind up dead so I've just got to be smart, smarter, make wiser decisions.

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- ☐ I want to help someone to rerepresent ASN at the International Network of Street Papers conference in July. I want to donate \$ _____
- ☐ I want to donate Air Miles points towards air fair to the conference in Glasgow, Scotland in 2014

For more information about ASN, Call Managing Editor
Linda Dumont at 780-428-0805

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Fathers are Becoming Legends In The Lives of The Children They Co-Create.



Maria B. By Maria B.

"Taking responsibility as a father takes a courageous determination"

By Maria B.

There are two major ezcuses for a father to become a legend. The first one is divorce. It is so easy to blame the other person and get a divorce. For men, they will seek a new woman, preferably younger, get married again and "start" a new family. After that their first family becomes a thing of the past. The second major excuse is for men to have unprotected sex and become an unprepared and unwanted fathers. These kinds of fathers become legends through denial and cowardly running "out of sight, out of mind" Women are left alone with the total responsibility and without any kind of support. If you are not ready to be a father, please do not pro-create a child.

I don't think most women have

a clue what they are dealing with These men are looking for sex and not to procreate a child. If in the transgression they happened to create a child, they will just walk away. These are not fathers, these are men looking for a "good time" only. It is hard to comprehend why a person will think that just because a man happened to have sex with a woman and procreated a child, they become responsible fathers. Having sex does not equate loving your partner. Loving is a life commitment, having sex is a limited performance. It does takes a real man to procreate a child and become a responsible father to that child.

It is very sad because while the man feels they do not need these children in their lives, the children need a father in their lives. Studies have shown that children living in homes without fathers are five times more likely to live in poverty than children who live with both

their mother and their father. Fatherless children are also two to three times more likely to develop an emotional or behavioral problem requiring psychiatric treatment. Studies have shown that children who grow up without fathers are more likely to commit crimes, and do poorly in school. Perhaps, most tragically of all, children who grow up fatherless also are more likely to commit suicide than those who grow up in a home with both their mother and father. The emptiness makes children seek comfort in drugs and alcohol.

I can attest to the fact that children that grow up without fathers fail to develop a sense of belonging and grow up living in the shadows. They become the unwanted children, the ones that might end up in foster homes, reinforcing their feelings of unwantedness. These children grow up with very little self esteem; they will have problem trusting adults, or these will be the children will become the prey for pedophiles as these predators can very easily identify the need that these children have for acceptance from adult males.

Children are well aware that they have a "father" someplace in the vast world and that this person is not suitable to be in their lives or holds no interest in being part of their growing years. Because they know that they were co-created by a male, they will always wonder what was wrong with them that the male did not think the child was important.

What seems very predictable is that children growing up without their father in the home face an increased risk of developing significant problems. This does not mean that all children who grow up in fatherless homes will encounter problems. Indeed, many of them will do just fine. But research indicates that fatherless children

face more obstacles than those who grow up with both a mom and a dad, and are at greater risk for a host of developmental problems. Experts agree that a Father holds a divine role in the lives of their children.

The Divine Role of a Father To My Incredible Husband Looking at you, I see an incredible majestic mountain,

A source of strength, commitment and true devotion for your family. There is a sense of protection that your sole essence projects and this is not only physical as it has become the kind of leadership that serves to strengthen your children's judgments and serves to guide them through your actions, giving them a sample of the virtues that they will need in their lives. Your focus on this has been the kind of leadership toward commitment, responsibility and a strong sense of self respect.

Through your kindness, unconditional love and understanding you have been able to bring out the best in every one of your children In their eyes you stand with strength and honour Your Divine Role as a father, grandfather and great grandfather has provided them with loving and clear instructions of this Divine Role.

We do not need to be experts to agree to the fact that a loving and nurturing father has a profound and positive impact in the life of a child. This relationship begins in infancy and continues through all the developmental stages to last a lifetime. There are the cases where the mother makes a choice to lead a life that precludes the

father and most of the time this is done for selfish reasons. Yet, more often than not, it is due to neglect, irresponsibility, and selfishness of the parents that a child has to live in a home without a father.

I am going to ask you to put yourself in the shoes of a fatherless child and re-frame everything you thought and realize the incredible need that children have in their life for their father. If you have grown up as a wounded child, believe that you can heal yourself and you are very capable of raising a child with the love, patience and understanding that you would have liked to have when you were a child. Through the wounds in our childhood we have learned to respond or/and react in life with methods that served to protect ourselves, but as parents we have to realize that there is no need to protect ourselves from these defenseless beings. We can heal ourselves, becoming a source of strength that our children need us to be in order to feel protected and safe.

When we make our priority to create a safe place for the expression of all the feelings and needs of our children, we are creating and helping to develop the incredible potentials that our children have. We must fill their hearts and minds with acceptance, understanding and unconditional love. This will be the spark that is needed to allow them to soar and become the incredible human beings that they are supposed to be.

In life as parents we want to leave the kind of legacy that would help our children in their future. When they think about integrity, fairness and unconditional love, I want my children to think about me. The role of a mother is thoroughly divine but the role of a father it has to do with emotional strength

and greatness! Make the decision and the commitment to be an incredible Dad.

Happy Fathers' Day

Free Meals In Red Deer

Barahcah Place

4611-50 Avenue

Lunch - 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. Monday to Friday

Loaves and Fishes

6002-54 Avenue

403 347-1844

Supper - 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Potter's Hands,

4935-51 Street

403 309-4246

Breakfast - 6:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. Monday to Friday

9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Saturday

Lunch - 11:30 to 1:00 p.m. Monday

Supper - 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Tuesday

Seventh Day Adventist Church

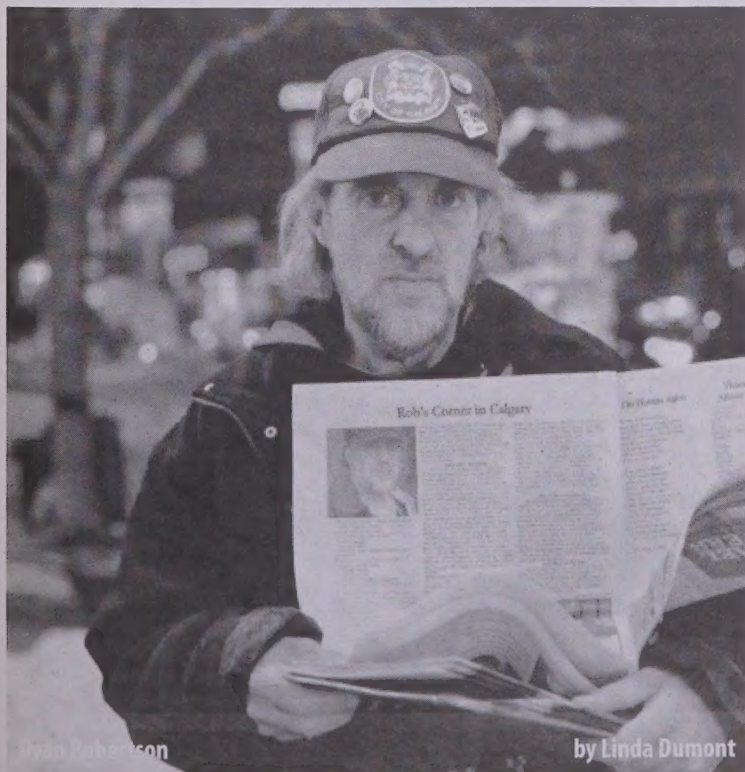
5014 - 49 Street

403 341-4470

Supper 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Thursday and Saturday

ROB'S CORNER IN CALGARY



By Robert Champion

Some of my favourite things to do

Selling the Alberta Street Newspaper, making new friends, writing for the Alberta Street News. Meeting up with friends, chatting, having a coffee or a pint of beer, going for a long bike ride on a warm summer's type day. Watching sports such as hockey, Canadian football. Also classical movies, westerns, comedy, sci-fi, suspense and TV classics.

What it means to be a friend

A friend is somebody who knows all about you but likes you anyway - Orson Welles

Friendships multiply joys and divide griefs. - H.G. Bohn

The language of friendships is not words, but meaning. Henry David Thoreau

It's the ones you can call at 4 a.m. who matter. Marlene Dietrich
My friends are my estates. Emily Dickens

In such a rich country - Why?

Why are there so many young people roaming our streets without a home to go to? Why are there so many people without a family doctor? Why isn't there more affordable housing being built in Calgary? Why are wait times to get a bed in a hospital so long in such a rich country? Why is youth unemployment so high in

Canada?

Stranded on a deserted island with a total stranger!

This person seemed to be friendly enough, could tell right away we had both been shipwrecked and now stranded for quite a spell, a month or so. Was good to know that I wasn't alone anymore. It was good to know that I had found a nice friend.

This person was willing and kind enough to share ideas on how to survive and how to build a shelter, and to be able to send signals to possible passing ships and airplanes.

In such a rich city, in Calgary

Why isn't there more decent affordable housing? One reason may be because people (homeowners) don't want low income housing in their neighbourhoods because they fear their property value will be depleted, that low income

people are drug addicts, alcoholics, pedophiles, prostitutes and who knows what? Meanwhile a lot of our youth, the elderly, people with special needs land up in shelters, so what kind of a city are we living in? On one hand the City of Calgary says we need more affordable housing, on the other hand there is no evidence to say the city is serious in solving the homeless problem.

Rob's say of the day

A random act of kindness can go a long way to making someone's day just a little brighter.

Selling the paper helps people to appreciate the money they are receiving was earned and not just handed to them. A lot of people who buy a street papers appreciate the effort and dedication we vendors put into the paper, a lot of us anyway.

Far too many people still see us vendors as little more than common drug addicts, alcoholics or panhandlers, and just don't see what we do is a job.

MISSION

Edmonton Street News Society provides a voice, employment and social support to those who need these, and communications perspective dealing with poverty and social justice, by education and communication activities, including publishing a street newspaper.

Values/Beliefs/Guiding Principles

We believe in being inclusive and encouraging. We believe that human rights are fundamental to living together. We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to earn and control their money. We believe in journalistic and organizational professionalism and integrity. We believe the public needs to know about the issues of poverty and social justice. We value community and connecting with others. We value passion and determination. We believe everyone deserves the opportunity to learn, develop and use communication skills.

THEIR STORY: BEATRICE

By Eric Rice

Beatrice was born in St. Paul, Alberta in 1959. She was raised on the Saddle Lake reserve by her grandparents, who taught her Cree and always spoke it at home. That is one of the things she finds sad about the new generation – the Cree language is slipping away and with it more and more of the stories and history and culture of the Cree.

When she was sixteen she moved to Edmonton by herself, where she took secretarial arts at Alberta College. This helped her get a job with the Government of Canada as a secretary, where she worked and supported herself for many years.

It was then the seventies in Alberta. Times were booming, and the oil industry was looking for people. Beatrice answered the call, and went to work for a catering company that looked after camps for drilling rigs. It was good pay, but hard work. She worked all over Alberta and B.C., wherever the camps took her. She did everything – cooked, cleaned, served – and she remembers more than anything else the routine. When you're in the camps work is pretty well all you do, day after day, for long shifts. It was great to get a big pay cheque, and the rig workers appreciated the work of the caterers because it made their lives more bearable.

One time she remembers she was working in a camp by Wabasca, about four hours north of Edmonton. The workers called it Pelican City, because there were so many camps clustered together, and they lit the night sky. Their



Beatrice

By Eric Rice

camp tenants got their pay and were not happy – there had been some promises made about increases that weren't kept. The crew on the rig and the crew off shift got boozed up and trashed the camp in the wee hours of the morning before taking off. Beatrice hid in her room and nobody bothered her, but they had a hell of a mess to clean up the next day!

After many years on the rigs her joints started to give her problems. When the groceries came into the camp part of her job was unloading the trucks – five gallon pails of cooking oil in each hand, packages of frozen meat over her shoulder – these things are hard on the body for a smaller woman. After a while

her body couldn't take it anymore. She moved back to Saddle Lake, and went to the doctors in St. Paul who diagnosed her with rheumatoid arthritis. She moved to Edmonton and starting seeing arthritis specialists, who told her that her arthritis was incurable. All they could do was slow it down. She is a status Indian, so during her early diagnosis and treatment INAC paid for most of the medications. With recent cutbacks, however, she is having to cover the costs more and more herself.

Alberta Street News helps her in many ways. It helps her pay for groceries and medication. It gives her a reason to get out of her

room and get moving. She sells along with other vendors that she knows. It is a close community. She is a Roman Catholic and goes to Sacred Heart and St. Joseph's, where she prays and lights candles for the friends and family that have passed away. She uses a walker to get around.

Her own hopes for the future are modest ones. She wants to get her own place and settle down and grow old gracefully. It seems like a small enough wish, but she knows that it may not be easy to achieve. Every time somebody buys a newspaper from her it helps her on her way.